



Multi-State Alternate Assessment (MSAA)

Sample Items Overview

Session Overview

- MSAA design
- Taking a closer look: item types and the characteristics of the various items
- Overview of MSAA sample items (English language arts and mathematics only)

Overall Goal of MSAA

To develop a system of assessments supported by curriculum, instruction, and professional development to ensure that students with the most significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for postsecondary options

MSAA

- Summative assessment
 - (March through May)
- Math and ELA, including **writing**
 - Grades 3-8 and grade 11

Assessment Design

- Online platform (computer based)
- Item types are:
 - Selected response and constructed response
 - Math constructed response at various grade levels
 - Writing both selected and constructed response
- Items of varying complexity
- Scripted directions for test administrators

MSAA Item Development and Item Complexities

- The MSAA items were developed at varying degrees of complexity that measure the same academic skill.
- In order to know more about the characteristics of the students who participate in alternate assessments, the learner characteristic inventory (LCI) was administered.
- The data from the LCI was incorporated into the development and complexities used to create each item.

Principled Design

- Variable features are written into the tasks (implemented) to support the integration of UDL:
 - Aspects of assessment tasks that can be varied in order to control difficulty or target emphasis of the knowledge, skills, and abilities
 - UDL categories: receptive, expressive, language and symbols, cognitive, executive, affective
- The embedded variable features allow the assessment to measure the academic skills that all students with significant cognitive disabilities have acquired.

Item Complexities

- Each content standard is assessed by items written at various levels of complexity.
- For example, in mathematics, some items use only mathematical notation, and other items accompany the notation with a visual model of its meaning.

Mathematics (Standards)

Grade 3

3.NO.1I3 Identify the fraction that matches the representation (rectangles and circles; halves, fourths, and thirds, eighths).

EU: Count the number of the parts selected (3 of the 4 parts; have fraction present but not required to read $\frac{3}{4}$).

Grade 6

CCC: 6.ME.2a2 Solve one-step real world measurement problems involving unit rates with ratios of whole numbers when given the unit rate (3 inches of snow falls per hour, how much in 6 hours).

Grade 11

CCC: H.DPS.1c1 Use descriptive stats; range, median, mode, mean, outliers/ gaps to describe data set.

EU: Identify the highest and lowest value in a data set given a number line and matching symbols (concept of range).

Mathematics Grade 3 Sample Item 1

Statement
reminding
students what the
item is about

Demonstration

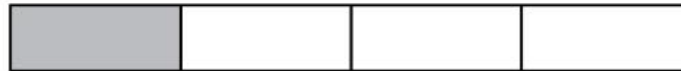
Simplified language

Sample Math Items - Grade 3

Sample Item 1

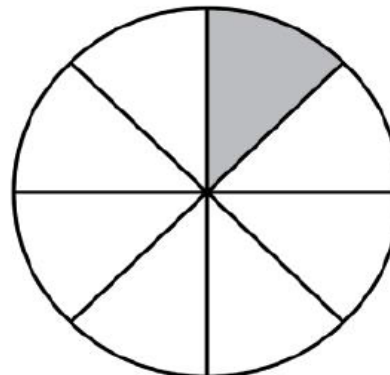
This item is about fractions.

This fraction bar is divided into 4 equal parts.



There is 1 part that is shaded. This fraction bar shows one-fourth.

This fraction circle is divided into 8 equal parts.



Mathematics Grade 3 Sample Item 1

Sample Math Items - Grade 3

What part of the fraction circle is shaded?

☐ $\frac{1}{2}$

☐ $\frac{1}{4}$

☐ $\frac{1}{8}$

3 answer options

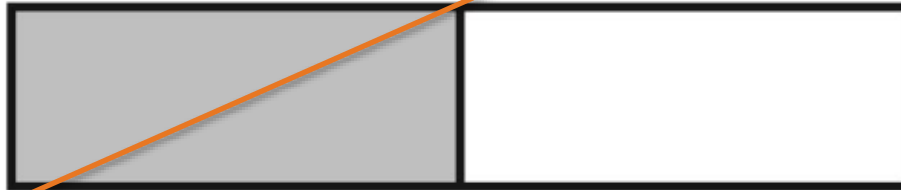
Mathematics Grade 3 Sample Item 2

Sample Math Items - Grade 3

Sample Item 2

This item is about fractions.

This rectangle is divided into 2 equal parts.



Statement reminding students what the item is about

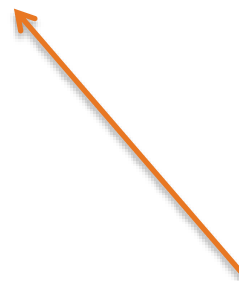
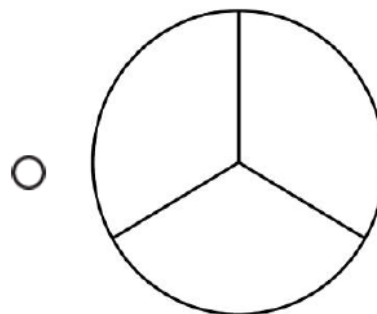
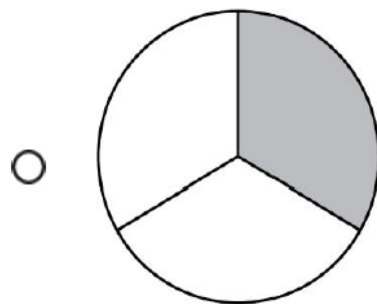
Simplified language

There is 1 part that is shaded.

Mathematics Grade 3 Sample Item 2

Sample Math Items - Grade 3

Which circle shows 1 out of 3 parts is shaded?



2 answer options

Mathematics Grade 6 Sample Item 1

Sample Math Items - Grade 6

Sample Item 1

This item is about solving a problem using a ratio.

June learned 6 new vocabulary words for every chapter she read. This is a ratio of 6 to 1.

$6 : 1$

June learned 60 new vocabulary words.

How many chapters did June have to read to learn 60 new vocabulary words?

- ☐ 3 chapters
- ☐ 6 chapters
- ☐ 10 chapters

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Added context and language

Mathematical notation only

3 answer options

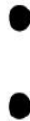
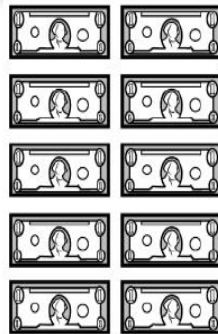
Mathematics Grade 6 Sample Item 2

Sample Math Items - Grade 6

Sample Item 2

This item is about solving a problem using a ratio.

Connie earned \$10 for every car she washed.



10:1

This is a ratio of 10 dollars earned for 1 car washed.

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Mathematical notation and visual representation

Simplified language

Mathematics Grade 6 Sample Item 2

Sample Math Items - Grade 6

**How many dollars did Connie
earn by washing 3 cars?**

- ☐ \$10
- ☐ \$11
- ☐ \$30



3 answer options

Mathematics Grade 6 Sample Item 3

Sample Math Items - Grade 6

Sample Item 3

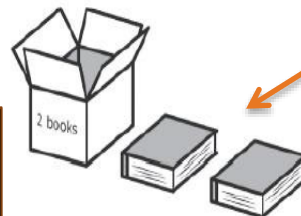
This item is about solving a problem using a ratio.

The students in Ms. Victor's class collected books.

There are three boxes.



Each box holds 2 books.



Statement reminding students what the item is about

Simplified language

Visual supports

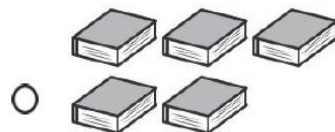
Mathematics Grade 6 Sample Item 3

Sample Math Items - Grade 6

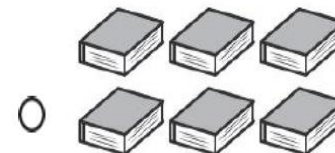
How many total books did the students put in to fill the 3 boxes?



3 books



5 books



6 books

Visual supports
in answer
choices

3 answer options

Mathematics Grade 11 Sample Item 1

Sample Item 1

This item is about finding the mean of a set of data.

The mean is the average of the numbers in a set of data.

This data table shows the number of algebra problems Chris did for homework each of 4 days last week.

Number of Algebra Problems

Day	Number of Problems
Monday	5
Tuesday	4
Wednesday	5
Thursday	6

To find the mean, add all of the values in the list and divide the sum by the number of values.

To find the mean number of problems, first add all of the values.

Sample Math Items - Grade 11

$$5 + 4 + 5 + 6 = 20$$

Then divide the sum by the number of values. There are 4 values, so divide 20 by 4.

$$20 \div 4 = 5$$

The mean number of problems is 5.

This is another data table.

This data table shows the number of magazine articles Jan read each of 4 days last week.

Number of Magazine Articles

Day	Number of Articles
Monday	4
Tuesday	2
Wednesday	4
Thursday	6

Demonstration

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Demonstration

Mathematics Grade 11 Sample Item 1

What is the mean number of articles Jan read each day last week?

- ☐ 4 articles
- ☐ 6 articles
- ☐ 16 articles



3 answer options

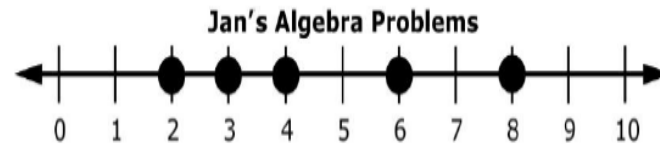
Mathematics Grade 11 Sample Item 2

Sample Math Items - Grade 11

Sample Item 2

This item is about a number line.

This is a number line.



The least value is farthest to the left on the number line.

The greatest value is farthest to the right on the number line.

Jan does algebra problems. The dots on the number line show how many algebra problems Jan did in each of her math classes last week.

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Demonstration

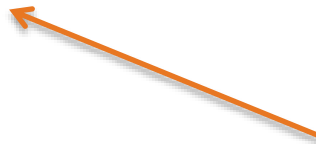
Simplified language

Mathematics Grade 11 Sample Item 2

**What is the greatest number
of algebra problems Jan did in
math class last week?**

☐ 2

☐ 8



2 answer options

Reading (Standards)

Grade 4

CCC 4.RL.k2 Determine the theme of a story, drama, or poem; refer to text to support answer.

CCC 4.RL.i1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly.

Grade 8

CCC 8.RI.k4 Identify an argument or claim that the author makes

CCC 8.RI.j1. Use two or more pieces of evidence to support inferences, conclusions, or summaries of text.

Grade 11

CCC: 112.RI.b1 Use two or more pieces of evidence to support inferences, conclusions, or summaries from text.

CCC 1112.RI.d1 Determine the author's point of view or purpose in a text.

Graduated Text Complexity of Reading Passages

Less Complex

- Simple sentences
- Commonly used words
- Theme is obvious
- Clear events in order
- Predictable events
- Simple charts and tables
- Answers taken from the text

More Complex

- Simple and compound sentences (i.e., and)
- Some grade-level words
- Theme is clear
- Connections between ideas and events presented in order
- Charts and tables
- Answers drawn from the text

Most Complex

- Compound and complex sentences
- Grade-level words
- Theme implied
- Connections between a range of ideas and events
- Charts and tables essential to understand text
- Answers inferred from the text

English Language Arts Grade 4 Sample Item 1

Sample ELA Items - Grade 4

Directions

We are going to read a story about a boy named Ben. After we read, you will be asked a question about the theme. Listen for the message of the story.

Ben's Present



Ben wants a dog. He thinks about dogs every day. In the morning, he begs his mom for a dog. His mom says dogs are a lot of work.



At night, he tells his dad that he will be good if he gets a dog. Ben's dad says that dogs cost a lot of money.



Ben's parents ask him what he wants. Ben says he wants a dog. He says he will walk the dog. He will feed the dog. He will play with the dog. He will pay for the dog's food.



Ben shows his parents he can take care of a dog. He watches a neighbor's dog for a week. He walks the dog.



He feeds the dog. He plays with the dog. Ben's parents see his hard work.



Then one morning, Ben hears a bark. He jumps out of bed. He smiles.

Statement reminding students what the item is about

English Language Arts Grade 4 Sample Item 1



He runs down the stairs. He sees his gift. It is a cute, brown dog. Ben hugs the dog. The dog wags his tail. A smile comes across Ben's face. Ben got a dog!

Would you like to read the story again before you are asked a question?

Re-read
passage or
passage
part

Sample Item 1

Remember, the theme is the message of the story.

What is the theme of this story?

☐



having a lot of friends

☐



showing you can take care of a pet

☐



asking your parents for something

Would you like to read the story again before you answer the question?

3 answer
options with
visual
supports

English Language Arts Grade 4 Sample Item 2

Passage part; same passage as previous example

Sample ELA Items - Grade 4

We read about a boy named Ben. We are going to read part of the story again. Then you will answer a question. Listen for the present Ben gets.



Visual supports

He runs down the stairs. He sees his gift. It is a cute, brown dog. Ben hugs the dog. The dog wags his tail. A smile comes across Ben's face. Ben got a dog!

Would you like to read the story again before you are asked a question?

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Simplified language

Re-read passage or part

Sample Item 2

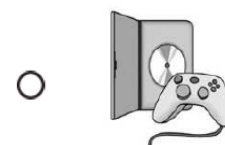
What did Ben get?



a bike



a dog



a video game

Visual supports in answer options

3 answer options

Would you like to read this part again before you answer the question?

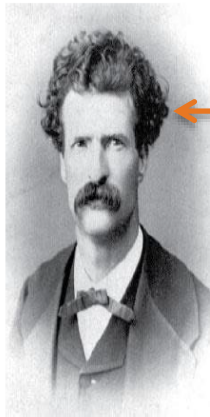
English Language Arts Grade 8 Sample Item 1

Sample ELA Items - Grade 8

Directions

We are going to read informational text about a man named Mark Twain. He lived a long time ago and wrote books. After we read, you will be asked a question about an argument the author makes.

The Life and Works of Mark Twain

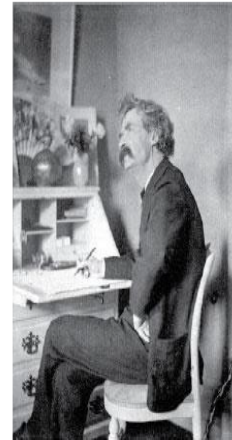


Mark Twain was an American writer. He was born in 1835. He wrote many books, but his best known books are "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn".

Both books are set in Missouri. This is where Twain lived.

Twain first began by writing articles and drawing sketches for his brother's local newspaper. He became well known after he wrote a short humorous story.

Twain lived his life on the go. He traveled throughout the country and overseas. He gained the attention of presidents and celebrities.



Twain was fascinated by science and technology. He actually created several inventions. His love of science was reflected in his book, "A

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Compound and complex sentences

Visual supports

Compound sentences

Visual supports

English Language Arts Grade 8 Sample Item 1

Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court". In this book, one of the characters is a time traveler. This type of story was one of the first of its kind.

Mark Twain has influenced many people. He is seen as a great American author.

Would you like to read the passage again before you are asked a question?

Re-read passage or part

Sample Item 1

Remember, an author uses an argument, based on facts, to make the reader believe something.

What argument did the author make about Mark Twain?



Mark Twain was a famous scientist.



Mark Twain lived in Missouri.



Mark Twain was a talented author.

Would you like to read the text again before you answer the question?

Statement reminding students what the item is about

Visual supports in answer options

3 answer options

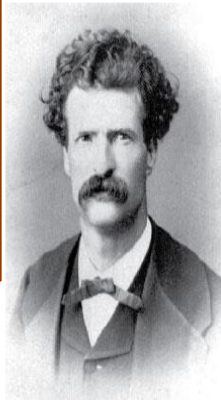
English Language Arts Grade 8 Sample Item 2

Passage part; same passage as previous example

Sample Item 2

We read about a man named Mark Twain. We are going to read part of the text again. Then you will be asked a question about an inference.

The Life and Works of Mark Twain



Mark Twain was an American writer. He was born in 1835. He wrote many books, but his best known books are "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer" and "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn". Both books are set in Missouri. This is where Twain lived.

Twain first began by writing articles and drawing sketches for his brother's local newspaper. He became well known after he wrote a short humorous story.

Twain lived his life on the go. He traveled throughout the country and overseas. He gained the attention of presidents and celebrities.

Mark Twain was a famous writer. Which sentence tells that Mark Twain was famous?

☐



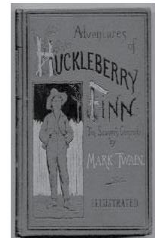
He was born in 1835.

☐



He wrote for his brother's newspaper.

☐



He became well known after he wrote a story.

Would you like to read this part again before you answer the question?

Item about a passage part with a reminder statement

Visual supports

Statement reminding students about what the item is about

Visual supports in answer options

3 answer options

Simple and compound sentences

English Language Arts Grade 8 Sample Item 3

Second question about passage and answer options

Sample Item 3

What is another sentence that tells that Mark Twain was famous?

☐



The setting of both books is in Missouri.

☐



He traveled throughout the country.

☐



He gained the attention of presidents and celebrities.

3 answer options

Visual supports in answer options

Would you like to read this part again before you answer the question?

English Language Arts Grade 11

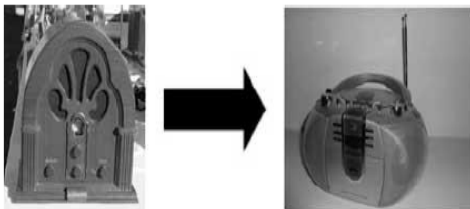
Statement reminding students about the what the item is about

Directions

We are going to read informational text about the invention of the radio and television. After we read, you will be asked questions about details that support a conclusion.

The Impact of Radio and Television

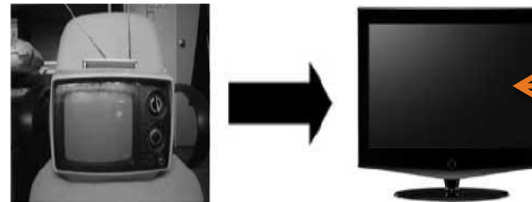
There were two important inventions in the 20th century, radio and television. These two inventions changed people's daily lives.



Radio

The first radio transmitted the human voice in 1900. The radio was originally invented to send messages. Americans used radios for the first time to listen to music, news, and entertainment programs. By the 1930s, more than half of American homes had a radio. For the first time,

people could hear breaking news from around the world while in their homes.



Television

Television was even more popular than the radio. It was invented in 1926. It allowed people to watch moving pictures in their own homes. At first, television shows were broadcast using black and white pictures. In 1953, television shows became available in color. By 1978, almost every family in America had at least one television in their home. Now people could see live images from around the world.

The invention of radio and television has had a great impact on our daily lives. Today, radios and televisions are widely used at home and in classrooms. Think how different your life would be without radios or televisions.

Would you like to read the text again before you are asked a question?

Visual supports

Compound and complex sentences, some grade-level words

English Language Arts Grade 11

Sample Items 1 and 2

Sample Item 1

From reading the text you can conclude that radio changed people's daily lives. Which detail supports that radio changed people's daily lives?

Statement reminding students what the item is about

☐



There were two important inventions in the 20th century.

☐



Television was more popular than the radio.

☐



Americans used radio for the first time to listen to music.

Would you like to read the text again before you answer the question?

3 answer options

Sample Item 2

What is another detail that supports that radio changed people's daily lives?

☐



The radio was invented to send messages.

☐



Every family in America had at least one television.

☐



People could hear breaking news from around the world.

Would you like to read the text again before you answer the question?

Visual supports in answer options

English Language Arts Grade11

Sample Item 3

Passage part; same passage as previous example

Sample Item 3

We just read about the impact of radio and television. We are going to read part of the text again. After we read, you will be asked a question about the author's point of view.



The invention of radio and television has had a great impact on our daily lives. Today, radios and televisions are widely used at home and in classrooms. Think how different your life would be without radios or televisions.

Would you like to read the text again before you are asked a question?

Statement reminding student what the student just read and what the student will be looking for next

Item about a passage part with a reminder statement

Visual supports in answer options

People can have different points of view. Remember, an author's point of view is how the author thinks about the subject.

What is the author's point of view about radio and television?



Radio and television have little use.



Radio and television are found in the workplace.



Radio and television have changed people's lives.

Would you like to read the text again before you answer the question?

Assessing Writing

- Scaffolded support
- Focus on idea development, organization, and conventions
- Uploading and/or submitting final writing product

Writing

- Selected Response Items
 - Test writing skills
 - Full range of complexity represented
- Writing Prompt
 - Will be generated by student using selected responses
- Writing Materials
 - Reference materials are provided to support the student
 - Example: Good writers...
 - Will be scored using a rubric (will not be scored by test administrators)

Writing: Uploading Evidence

- It is critically important that the test administrator is aware of the options for submitting the writing response(s) for students:
 - Upload evidence
 - Transcribing
 - Annotation

*Additional information about these processes are in the *MSAA Test Administration Manual* and training modules.

Contact Information

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Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.

Excellence | Optimism | Judgment | Courage | Teamwork